

**Police and Public Safety
Commission Meeting
10 October 2012**

The Boonsboro Police and Public Safety (P&PS) Commission held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, 10 October 2012 at 6:30 PM on first floor of Town Hall. Members present were Commission Chairman Chris Sarnecki, Commission Members Cindy Collier, Bob Glausier, Frank Lum and Scott Stavrou. Also present was P&PS Council Liaison Sean Haardt. Police Chief Jeff Hewett was not in attendance. There were no guests at the meeting.

The Minutes from the 12 September 2012 P&PS Commission meeting had been previously hand delivered to Commission Members by Chairman Sarnecki. After additional review of the 12 September 2012 Minutes, **Motion** by Commission Member Glausier, second by Commission Member Lum, to officially approve the 12 September 2012 P&PS Commission Minutes and Motion unanimously carried.

Sarnecki opened the meeting by briefly welcoming everyone in attendance and then distributed the Agenda for tonight's meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Sarnecki gave a brief synopsis of the observations given by the three (3) guests: Reverend Joseph Donovan (Pastor, Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church), Mr. Thomas Bikle (President, Boonsboro Cemetery Board) and Mr. Rodney Cline (Secretary, Boonsboro Cemetery Board) from the 12 September 2012 P&PS Commission meeting. These guests, based on their independent observations, felt that it would be best to make Cemetery Lane a one-way street with traffic moving from Main Street to Reeders Alley. Near the conclusion of the 12 September 2012 meeting, Sarnecki charged the members of the Commission to study the traffic around the vicinity of Cemetery Lane, Reeders Alley, Main and Potomac Streets. He wanted particular attention paid to the possibility of reversing the current, one-way traffic flow of Reeders Alley, with traffic flowing East from Potomac Street to Main Street as earlier proposed by the *Downtown Revitalization Study for the Town of Boonsboro* (aka "The Mary Means Study") of the early 2000's. This familiarization was to be done prior to the 10 October 2012 P&PS Commission meeting. Sarnecki suggested a P&PS Commission site survey to study and observe the aforementioned areas. This was initiated and a group outing was held on Saturday 6 October 2012 with Sarnecki, Glausier and Stavrou in attendance. (Members Collier, Lum and Liaison Haardt studied the area of interest independently due to scheduling conflicts.) Sarnecki detailed this site survey and the various permutations of routes taken to achieve an overview of the various intersections and associated problems. Before opening the floor to general discussion, Sarnecki reminded the Commission that their final recommendation to Town Council, if acted upon, would have a large impact on area residents and businesses. Sarnecki therefore felt it would be best to be methodical and deliberate before forwarding a final recommendation. He remarked that there is no rush for the Commission to make its final decision. Collier stated that any recommendations potentially acted upon by Town Council may lead to many public hearings. As a result of the Commission's group site visit on 6 October 2012, Sarnecki contacted Town Planner and Zoning Administrator Megan Clark on 9 October 2012 and requested her to provide data on the grade of Main Street near the intersections of Cemetery Lane and Reeders Alley. He informed the Commission that he was still waiting for a response from Town Planner

Clark.

The first agreed upon salient point was that the existing traffic pattern of vehicles exiting Reeders Alley onto Potomac Street was dangerous and posed a serious “blind spot” for drivers. All Members commented that when exiting Reeders Alley onto Potomac Street, drivers had to slowly force the front of their vehicles into oncoming, northbound traffic on Potomac Street. Line of sight to observe oncoming traffic could be greatly diminished by cars legally parked in the parking lot servicing Vesta Restaurant, Potomac Street Creamery etc. and further exasperated by cars legally parked on Potomac Street. Lastly, safely exiting Reeders Alley onto Potomac Street was greatly influenced by the kindness of drivers on Potomac Street allowing enough room and time to perform a turn or continue across Potomac Street towards Shafer Park. Collier suggested that Boonsboro Police Department’s (BPD) Chief Hewett provide accident data pertaining to the intersection of Reeders Alley and Potomac Street, if available. Commission Members concurred with Collier’s suggestion. Sarnecki volunteered to contact Chief Hewett and request this information.

Conversely, the Commission Members observed that exiting Cemetery Lane onto Main Street was as difficult as had been previously suggested. It was countered that this observation could be greatly influenced by the time of day, the amount of traffic and whether a driver was in a sedan, a truck or sports utility vehicle (SUV), however; the general consensus was that the street parking on Main Street created a slightly safer buffer zone and a better line of sight for a vehicle to turn onto Main Street. Collier questioned whether the signage in Mount Nebo United Methodist Church’s entrance and parking lot was privately installed and maintained. Glausier noted that the signage was privately installed by the church to aid in the traffic flow for daycare drop-off, pick-up and church functions. Additionally, Commission members observed that Mount Nebo United Methodist Church deploys reflective traffic barricades at the Main Street entrance of their parking lot to prevent traffic entering.

Upon observation, Commission Members unanimously agreed upon the confusion encountered on Reeders Alley due to its one-way and two-way status at various stretches. They felt that reversing the current status of Reeders Alley’s traffic flow to making it a strictly one-way road, from Potomac Street to Main Street (per *The Downtown Revitalization Study for the Town of Boonsboro*), would aid in the out flow of traffic. Additionally, it offers the Town a contingency plan for traffic to exit the Town in the event Town Square was closed during an emergency and offers a means to lessen traffic during Town functions such as Boonesborough Days, The Christmas Tree Lighting event, etc. It was noted that the side streets along Potomac Street currently forces traffic back onto Potomac Street and presents one (1) means to exit Town Square (Cemetery Lane). The Commission also recognized that the afternoon traffic flow may be greatly affected. It was therefore suggested that a dedicated left turn lane, with a functioning left turn arrow, be created at the intersection of Main and Potomac Streets. Not only would this allow vehicles to turn westbound on Potomac Street from Main Street but also implement the recommendation made in *The Downtown Revitalization Study for the Town of Boonsboro*. If the above is not possible, the Commission Members recommended that the timing of the traffic lights at the intersection of Main and Potomac Streets would aid in the flow of traffic. Glausier recalled that approximately twelve (12) years ago Main Street was wider and more suitable to accommodate a turning lane, however; this changed when the now existing sidewalks were constructed. Commission Members weighed the financial impact of establishing a dedicated left turning lane and/or changing the timing or sequence of the traffic lights at the

intersection of Main and Potomac Streets and believed that businesses and pedestrians would benefit. They discussed the problem of large delivery trucks in the no parking zones, particularly in front of Dan's Tap House and Vesta Restaurants, and their impact on traffic flow along Main and Potomac Streets. It was suggested that perhaps better enforcement of these no parking zones will help alleviate the congestion.

Sarnecki asked for the preliminary opinions of the members. Collier believed it would be best to reverse the current, one-way traffic flow of Reeders Alley and supported making Reeders Alley one-way (eastbound) towards from Potomac Street to Main Street. She also suggested that Cemetery Lane be made one-way (northbound) from Reeders Alley to Main Street vice the recommendation made by Pastor Donovan. She added that this offers another means for traffic to exit from Reeders Alley onto Main Street. Glausier also supported the recommendation to make Reeders Alley one-way (eastbound) from Potomac Street to Main Street, however; he felt that Cemetery Lane should be one-way (southbound) from Main Street to Reeders Alley as proposed by Reverend Joseph Donovan and Messrs. Bikle and Cline. Stavrou concurred with Collier and Glausier regarding the reversal of one-way traffic flow on Reeders Alley but was currently non-committal on the traffic flow proposals for Cemetery Lane. Lum suggested as a potential compromise that Cemetery Lane be used with restricted or limited access. Sarnecki reminded the Commission that Chief Hewett was adamant during the 12 September 2012 Meeting that granting restricted or limited access or making exceptions to the traffic flow on Cemetery Lane for special events would pose a significant law enforcement problem. Furthermore, Chief Hewett stressed that if Cemetery Lane was changed to a one-way street, it should be done without any exceptions.

Sarnecki reiterated to the Commission that any recommendation would need to be thoroughly investigated and, due to the potential financial and political impact, the Commission should take its time before submitting a final recommendation to Town Council. He added that there is no set timeline for the Commission. With this in mind, further discussion was halted and would continue at the next meeting. Sarnecki offered to arrange another group site visit to the streets in question, if necessary.

Liaison Haardt informed the Commission that expansion of King Road or Warrior Boulevard was to take place in the near future and noted this in itself may alleviate some of the traffic flow problems associated with the aforementioned areas. Glausier recalled that there was a twenty (20) year plan that originally called for a bypass around Boonsboro. All Commission Members agreed that it would be helpful to know of any long term plans for the area surrounding the discussed streets. Sarnecki offered to contact Town Planner Clark and obtain this information.

Collier queried Sarnecki with the upcoming duties of the Commission as mentioned by outgoing Council Liaison Solberg: the identification of excess, damaged and inconsistent signage in Town; and the deteriorating or damaged sidewalks throughout Town. He believed that the Commission should first focus on its current assignment and then shift its attention to the signage. The Commission unanimously expressed its concerns and its uneasiness with the identification or enforcement of damaged sidewalks and thought that the Town's Public Works Department conducts the review again. Sarnecki agreed with their concerns and mentioned that he would naturally discuss further with Town Manager Debra Smith before venturing on to other duties. Haardt recalled that the Town of Middletown, Frederick developed a comprehensive repair plan for their sidewalks and thought their plan may be applicable to the

Town.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sarnecki reported that there is no new business.

LIAISON REPORT:

Liaison Haardt opened his report by congratulating Commission member Lum on the Mayor and Council's approval of his reappointment to the P&PS. Haardt asked Sarnecki about what information the Commission would like him to present to them from the lengthy and detailed Council Workshop and Regular Meetings. Sarnecki, along with the consensus of the Commission, thought it would be best for Haardt to cover those issues germane to the Commission and for him to provide any feedback that the Council had for the Commission. Liaison Haardt reported that he gave a general synopsis of the 12 September 2012 Commission Meeting to Council and noted their interest in the recommendation of making Cemetery Lane one-way. He volunteered that Council Members were surprised with the appearance and input from Mr. Cline, Secretary, Boonsboro Cemetery Board. Haardt indicated that one (1) Council Member was initially opposed to the guests' recommendation for Cemetery Lane, however; the Council looked forward to the Commission's final recommendation. The hope of the Commission was that Council maintains an open mind regarding any submitted recommendation.

POLICE REPORT:

There was no police report due to the previously mentioned absence of Chief Hewett.

Sarnecki again thanked the Commission for its hard work on Cemetery Lane and advised that the next Commission meeting would be held on Thursday 8 November at 6:30 PM.

Motion by Lum to adjourn, second by Glausier and Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Christopher J. Sarnecki
Chairman, Police and Public Safety Commission